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### New Spider widens the fleet

The new Falcon Spider FS290 has arrived and is ready to hire. With 29 metres of working height and able to enter through a doorway of 0.8 by 2m, it allows internal applications rarely available. Not only will the spider FS290 set up on uneven ground conditions but can give outreach of 14m with one man operation.

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# 'MEWPs are great'

**Its official! The HSE says that 'MEWPs are great'. The comment was made by Justine Lee of the Health & Safety Executive as she opened her presentation at the beginning of the IPAF summit held at Whittlebury Hall, Northamptonshire at the end of last month.**

In her talk on Management Responsibilities for Mobile Elevating Work Platforms to a packed room of access industry professionals, she pointed out that while aerial lifts have an excellent safety record, when an accident does occur it is often sensational.



Justine Lee of the HSE said that the HSE will be focusing on the proper management

She explained that accidents owed more to poor planning and management than whether the operator had been properly trained or not.

"We have no issue with operators," said Lee, "it is proper planning that is required to prevent accidents."

In order to reinforce this message, the HSE is planning a six month campaign starting October 2007, aimed specifically at steel erection contractors. "This is the area with most problems and we will be checking management arrangements and compliance with the new Construction Information Sheet (CIS) - aimed at those responsible for the selection and management of MEWPs - which will hopefully be published in June," said Lee.

She also said that crane hirers now check out the ability of contractors to plan and supervise their own lifts as do car rental companies when

they demand to see a valid driving licence. And yet, lifts are delivered to site often with no checks that the customer is competent to manage the use of MEWPs. She confirmed that the HSE is looking at the quality of planning rather than the plan itself, and pointed out that communication is a key part of this.

The next speaker, Steve Derbyshire, acting head of safety at Taylor Woodrow, was pleased to highlight the fact that companies including his are increasingly moving towards powered access.

"We still have ladders and towers on site," he said, "but we do a poor job managing towers and are increasingly moving even low-level



President Andrew Reid makes his address (Tim Whiteman MD-IPAF (R) Tony Mort (L).

work to aerial lifts. He highlighted the challenges that site managers have with so many different pieces of equipment and more than 200 skill trade cards covering some 54 different CPCS categories - a figure that has been reduced.

Chris Buisseret of Rapid Platforms discussed the qualifications for instructors and the new course covering the management of MEWPs. He pointed out how

important it was that site managers understood what was required to properly manage the aerial lifts working on their site.

"Yes it takes time to correctly plan and manage MEWPs on site, but try having an accident and then compare the time and cost involved with that to attending a course," he said.

Other speakers included Murray Pollock who looked at trends and developments in the UK rental market and Rupert Douglas Jones who updated everyone on the Clunk Click campaign for the wearing of harnesses in booms. He confirmed IPAF's view that in most cases the wearing of harnesses in vertical scissor type platforms is dangerous.

## The OZ way

Finally Bernie Kiekebosch the president of Australia's highly successful Elevating Work Platform Association, as well as regional

manager with Haulotte, informed delegates on how the Australian powered access industry is dealing with all manner of issues from training (the association has so far trained 100,000 operators out of a population of 20 million) to machine inspections, maintenance and obsolescence.

## Reid repeats his IPAF only call

Earlier in the day a smaller number of members attended the IPAF Annual General Meeting where president Andrew Reid updated them on progress and achievements over the past year. He pointed out that IPAF membership had more than doubled in four years to 450 members, much of the growth coming from continental Europe.

Referring back to his vision expressed last year where he hoped that in future no serious contractor would consider buying or hiring equipment from any company that was not a signed up member of IPAF, he confirmed that IPAF has now modified its membership criteria preventing any new applicant being 'blackballed' but insisting that members 'abide by the federations stringent codes of standards and ethics that are the core of IPAF membership'.

"Members who fail to do so will be thrown out with cowboys being named and shamed," he added.

He closed by calling on all members to support the positive safety-first message and to expose wrong doers so that IPAF can ensure that no serious customer will trade with anybody other than an IPAF compliant supplier.

After the days business around 200 members and their guests attended the annual IPAF dinner which heard Kevin - the 'caped crusader' - O'Shea give a witty after dinner speech in which he attempted to be as politically incorrect as possible picking on just about everyone apart from the Scots, to the great delight of most attendees.

The 2008 Summit will be held at the same venue on April 15th.



The summit was very well attended with most of the 200 plus seats taken



Bernie Kiekebosch of Australia's EWPA